

AN
INVESTIGATION,
&c. &c.



AN
INVESTIGATION
OF THE
LEGALITY AND VALIDITY
OF A
UNION.

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STUDENT OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE.

"However it may please the Almighty
"to dispose of Princes, or Parliaments; may the Liberties of
"the People be immortal."

MR. GRATTAN.

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1799.

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INVESTIGATION,

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THE first, and paramount law of a community, as well as of an individual, being that of self-preservation ; it is evident that whenever the existence of a state is threatened with danger, the exertions of each member of that state become a *debt* due to it, in order to avert or meet the impending blow.

Respecting inferior concerns ;—There may be abuse, there may be sufferance : but where the great question of National Independence or Subjection

jection comes to be agitated, every citizen feels alarmed and anxious for the preservation of his natural and unalienable rights.

Holding these sentiments, the truth of which I presume no person will deny, and actuated by a sincere love for my country, I shall obey the impulse of my mind, in laying before the tribunal of the people of Ireland those ideas, which have occurred to me concerning the projected Union between the English and Irish kingdoms.

I have observed with concern, that some Gentlemen who have treated of this subject, have scarcely noticed the question of RIGHT, and have dwelt much on the fatal *consequences* of an Union to this nation. This mode of reasoning seems to me productive of the most pernicious effects; for if the right is allowed for a moment, or even doubted of, the people become liable to be dazzled, by an insidious display of the great advantages they may receive, thro' an incorporating Union with Great-Britain.

I deny that any such right exists, or can exist; for as we have ever been considered an independent and sovereign kingdom, I cannot reconcile to myself the idea of that independence, and a
power

power capable of subjecting it, at pleasure, being co-existent. But as this right has been insinuated and indeed openly asserted, it may be useful at least to examine where it may be found, or whether its only foundation will be in an unlawful extension of the Prerogative.

As this question will be first brought forward in the English House of Commons, and as its concurrence is supposed necessary previous to its being laid before the Irish Parliament, we are naturally led to enquire what right the British Senate can have to annihilate the Legislative body of this kingdom.

I shall not here assert, that we never were a conquered people, because the submission made by a part of the nation to Henry II. was voluntary ; that allowing it to be true, the conquest of ancestors cannot bind posterity ; for *these* are established points, so that there can be no right of conquest claimed over us ; but I shall be satisfied with recurring to the reign of Henry III.

This Monarch's father, it is well known, reluctantly granted to the English nation that famous charter, which has ever since been considered as the bulwark of their liberties,
and

and the corner stone upon which they erected their so much admired constitution.

John ordained that the laws of England should be administered in Ireland, but Henry III. granted two CHARTERS to this kingdom, one in the first year of his reign, which contains the following words.

*“ Volumus, quod in signum fidelitatis vestrae,
 “ tam præclaræ tam insignis, Libertatibus,
 “ regno nostro Angliæ, a patre nostro et a nobis
 “ concessis, de gratia nostra, et dono, in regno nos-
 “ tro HIBERNIÆ, gaudeatis vos & vestri Hæ-
 “ rides in perpetuum,”*

The second granted by Henry, in the twelfth year of his reign, was exactly the same as the renowned Charter granted by King John to England. This Henry ordered to be read to the Parliament of Ireland, and to be of force throughout the kingdom!

Here then we behold the kingdoms of England and Ireland absolutely on equal terms; possessing the same security for the enjoyment of their liberties, with this difference, that the Charter of John was extorted from him by force, but that of Henry was granted freely to Ireland,

Ireland, "*in signum fidelitatis*." If the foundation of the English liberties is stable and inviolable, is not that of the Irish the same? If Englishmen profess that they would resist any infringement of their Charter with their swords, ought not Irishmen equally to oppose the violation of theirs?

Can Englishmen boast of their *Magna Charta* at home, and can they with justice or decency destroy it here? No! the grant of King John's Charter to this nation by his son, made her as free as England, giving an equal participation of rights and liberties to both kingdoms under one common King.

Here is no symptom of superiority—the two nations received a similar and sacred pledge for the security of their rights. The right of having a Parliament was, *prima facie*, granted and secured, because without it there could be no protection for the people against the encroachments of the crown.

If then each of the two kingdoms obtained and established an independent Legislature, submitting to no controul but that of the people who elected it, how can one of these bodies pretend to any superiority over the other?

In doing so, does it not admit that it is itself *controllable* by some superior and secret power, not that of the people? For it never can be their interest or wish to trample on, or extinguish the right of Parliaments,—but a power which aims at destroying the liberty of the subject entirely, and begins by attacking the rights of the more distant Legislature, as an experiment? the British Senate in voting for the destruction of the Irish Parliament, would prepare the way for their own: for it is manifest that if it is lawful and just to annihilate a Parliament in Ireland, it is equally justifiable to do so in England. It may not be expedient: but the expediency *may* come and then, the example of this kingdom may be given as a precedent.

If however this modern measure of *voting away* a Parliament shall not only be proposed, but passed in the English House of Commons, (for there can be no doubt, but that the proposal of the minister will have its accustomed and due weight) will it not appear that the English have no liberal and generous principle of true liberty, that they admire it only as a monopoly in their own country, and would deny it to their neighbours, and that as they shut us out from a free commerce

commerce over the globe, so would they wish to exclude us from a free enjoyment of the rights of mankind?

Will it not seem, that their liberality, their love of liberty, their proud integrity may be all reduced to the principle of a narrow selfishness, and that the monopolizing spirit of a commercial nation may be seen in her legislative act?

It may be remarked, that the vote of the English Parliament does not bind us, and nothing can expose the absurdity of the whole measure more forcibly than this point of view.

The English Legislature in passing a decree, which is either a nullity or insignificant, (for it will be allowed to have no force until it is confirmed by our Parliament) must confess to the world, that their decisions are sometimes empty and frivolous.

Doubtless in this manner they may vote an incorporating Union with China or Japan.

They lately voted the annexation of Corfica, and yet she is now separated from England!

It

It is certainly unnecessary to prove that the common law of England and Ireland is the same.

Every Englishman considers it as a sacred bequest from his ancestors, which cannot or ought not to be infringed. It is part of the common law that the People have a right to a Parliament, and therefore if the English Legislature attempted to vote away so sacred a right of the people of Ireland, it would be equally a violation of English and Irish law.

In the case of the Electors of Middlesex, the English Parliament vainly endeavoured to deprive a few Electors of their franchise. Their proceedings in that affair were afterwards erased from the Journals of the House, as illegal and unjust, thus plainly admitting their incapacity to disfranchise *any* Electors by this conduct. Yet we are told they can vote away the franchise of five millions of men !

The sturdy assertors of Liberty, who almost rebelled at the temporary infringement of the right of Election in one county of England, will coolly acquiesce in the plan of robbing Ireland of her freedom, her happiness, her independence !

Here,

Here, should England reply—that our commerce, our agriculture, our manners, would be prodigiously improved by an incorporation with her, and that other nations have practised the same measure with success. I would only deign to answer her thus.

“ *Disguise* thyself as thou wilt, still, Slavery thou art a bitter draught! and though thousands in all ages have drank of thee, thou art *no less bitter* on that account!”

As I trust it now appears that the English Parliament have no shadow of right to destroy our Legislature, and that even their voting for its annihilation would be unwise, absurd and illegal, we are naturally led still farther to examine where this right can exist.

Having discussed the question relative to the English Senate, we proceed to enquire what right the Irish Parliament, before whom the matter will next be brought, can assert on this momentous subject.

As the Parliament of England can only vote without binding or restraining us in the least, so that their decision will be a mere nullity, unless

our

our Parliament ratifies it : I refrained from examining deeply into a certain pretended, or implied right of Parliaments in themselves, until my subject carried me to investigate what power an Irish Parliament can have to sanction the measure of an incorporating Union between the two kingdoms.

The mystical and invisible author of “ Thoughts for and against a Union,” wishes for a full discussion of this subject. I shall indulge his wish, somewhat farther perhaps, than may be agreeable.

As the question forces us to consider the relative duties and powers of the Represented, and of the Representatives, it will be proper to advert to the origin of Parliament, in order to gain a clear comprehension of the whole.

In former times, when simplicity was united with perhaps as much wisdom as we have among us now—when martial and independent nations only acknowledged a leader and superior on account of his valour and knowledge—when the deadly arts of corruption were unpractised, because man had few wants, and did not understand refinements, it was usual for each state to hold a
great

great council yearly, or oftener if necessary, to approve or condemn the conduct of affairs in the past year, and to direct and regulate the administration of them for the future one.

At these general meetings, each nation was present in the persons of active and leading men, who had each a numerous train of followers, who might approve, condemn, or influence the conduct of their chiefs. The aggregate of these followers composed the nation—their leaders, the Representatives.

Thus in the earliest ages, the general sense of mankind has been, that a kingdom ought to be Represented.

However, the frequent appeals to the sword, and the continual quarrels of rival chiefs, making the state of society turbulent and precarious, and mankind, become more civilized, wishing for security and ease, many nations seem for these reasons to have acquiesced under the dominion of one man.

To avoid the horrors of civil commotion, they sunk into abject slavery.

In

In this degrading retrospect, England stands forth an illustrious exception, she alone saw with an enlightened eye the defective state of society, and discriminating well between the evils of licentiousness and tyranny, she wisely avoided both. She assisted her Kings to repress and destroy the galling power of the great men, and then she curbed the ambition of her Kings, allowing them to be the chief magistrates of the state, not the masters, or proprietors of it.

The God of Nature had ordained that the sacred flame of liberty should never be extinguished. Amidst the frightful chaos of surrounding despotism, the drooping goddess looked around for an asylum.

In Britannia, her approach was hailed with loud echoing songs of joy, the hills and valleys smiled a welcome, and their inhabitants raised a temple for the preservation of her ethereal fire, thro' the distant generations of a yet unborn posterity!

I know it has been fashionable to decry charters, as musty old relics, for which we have no occasion: but I ask what would be

be the situation of England, what would be her civilization at this day, if she had never had any?

Certainly, the world has been progressive in liberty as in science; and we owe much to our ancestors for their efforts in both.

England perceived that the people, to preserve the fruits of their struggles, ought to have their weight and influence operating in a constantly efficient mode: and therefore, formed a Legislative body, who were chosen by the nation, and invested with powers to act for it.

These deputies were entrusted with the management of the affairs of their electors for a limited time.

Their duty was to obey the instructions, express the will and attentively watch over the happiness of the kingdom; through them the people annually applied a certain sum of money necessary for carrying on the affairs of the state, and through them the people made such laws as were necessary for their internal police.

In spirit, in constitution, in form, the Irish Parliament exactly coincides with that of England!

The same Charter, the same common law, the same law of nature which teach a people to secure their own preservation, are equally the support and foundation of both!

In approaching nearer to the point, the absurdity and wickedness of representatives attempting to annihilate themselves, to commit a political suicide on their existence, to rob those who elected them of the right of election, appear to me so monstrous, that I almost think it impossible that a Parliament of Ireland could permit such a proposition as that of a Union to enter the walls of their house!

I would under this impression, and relying on the spirit, as well as the sense of my countrymen, desist from my present effort to address them, was it not, that members of Parliament have unblushingly avowed their approbation, warm approbation of this detestable measure! The danger of our country calls for the assistance of the most insignificant.

"Quem vocet Divum populus ruentis imperi rebus."

I am animated with the desire of exposing this horrible monster, which, issuing from the prolific

prolific head of the British minister, (though I will compare his offspring with the goddess of Wisdom in nothing but it being completely armed) bends her way to this ill-fated land.

Even now she brandishes her envenomed dagger.—Slavery at her right hand and Corruption at her left.

With a malignant scowl, she binds some with golden, some with iron fetters; and blighting the beauteous blossom of Independence with her poisonous breath, she strides along with Despair and Poverty attending her. The deserted avenues of the metropolis exhibit her destructive footsteps: In her progress she meets the sad genius of *Erin*. One blasting glance from the monster palsies every limb. The the resounding Harp falls from her nerveless hands, it trembles on the ground, and its mournful and broken notes sound the knell of expiring Ireland!

One good alone we receive, common suffering.

This will give one soul to the oppressed, will nerve their arms with irresistible strength, and will cause the unnatural and forced incorporation

poration of two distinct and sovereign kingdoms to dissolve at the august voice of a collected nation!

When the people elect representatives, they deposit a sacred trust in their hands, limited in extent and duration. They do not surrender to them an unlimited power over their lives and properties, they merely *delegate* certain deputies to preserve both. There seems to be a considerable confusion of ideas on this subject, on account of not distinguishing properly between two things, essentially different; the fundamental laws of the Constitution, and the necessary and expedient laws for the regulation of the state. The former ought to be immutable, the latter may be amended, altered or repealed.

When a nation constitutes an independent Legislature, they must certainly have some *data* to act upon; they must consider for what purposes they wish to form a Legislature.

The fact is, the whole nation *wills* some fundamental laws or conditions, and then selects a number of deputies to guard and protect them, and also to manage the general interests of the the community.

These

These fundamental conditions are—

That the lives, properties and persons of the society should be secure.

That their rights and liberties should be sacred.

That the welfare of the whole should be the constant end in view.

The construction of Parliaments is a necessary measure, to prevent an infringement of these primary conditions; and is, indeed, a simple consequence of them. To secure liberty is the cause, Parliaments are the means of securing it.

Shall then a deputed body, elected by the nation, dare to deprive, not of any one law, but of the right of making laws, through representatives, those who delegated them?

Shall they dare to trample down those fundamental conditions that gave birth to Parliaments?

Shall they, the creatures of their Constituents, dare to turn their impious and sacrilegious hands on their creators?

Shall

Shall they, the chosen servants of the kingdom, dare to destroy its independence and sovereignty ?

Shall they barter Irish liberty for *uncertain* commercial advantages, and like the offspring of the Pelican, feed and fatten on the blood and vitals of their Parent !

No ! happily, they have not the power to dispose of rights they never possessed, and which must ever remain in the people !

The absurdity of the idea is indeed manifest. The Irish Parliament decree that Ireland shall no longer have a Legislature.

The nation replies, “ whether we shall chuse to have a Legislative body or not, comes under our own cognizance alone : we constituted you to regulate our affairs, and formerly paid you for doing so : but in emancipating ourselves from the tyranny of one, we never meant to put ourselves under the yoke of a certain number of tyrants.

We have no doubt, but that any one among yourselves would be much surprized and enraged,

raged, if the agent or steward of his estate, informed him that he intended *to dispose of it to a neighbouring Gentleman.*

No doubt any one of you would reprimand, and punish him severely for such an attempt, would signify to him that he was employed to take of the property, not to injure or alienate it, and would most probably *dismiss* him, for his improper and dishonest intentions.

Such is exactly our case, and we cannot allow *our* stewards to exceed the limits of their trust, as we have a property at stake—the dearest—the most precious—the most valuable that man can have, his Liberty!

The Parliament answers, “ we allow we have been deputed to represent you, but we reserved the free exercise of our judgment to ourselves, we must not be overawed by you, we think this measure useful and justifiable. Your commerce will be improved. Your distractions will be appeased: and you will send some deputies to the Grand Council of the Empire.”

In vain may the nation urge, that the mere interpreters of their will ought not to arrogate to themselves a tyrannical power over the fundamental

mental laws of the Constitution. That the duty and power of a Member of Parliament, and the voting away the Legislature of the kingdom are incompatible things. The Parliament *may* pass a decree destroying themselves as a legislature, and forbidding the people to elect another. If this is so, we must next enquire how far such a decree would be binding.

The violation of a trust, evidently by the law of nature and equity, amounts to an abdication of it. The trustee by acting unworthily, confesses himself to be treacherous, dishonest and unfit for his charge,

He had a duty to perform, by which he was bound to act within certain limits. He oversteps these limits.

He ceases to be a trustee! *His acts are no longer those of one, and do not bind as such.*

But the Representatives of the Nation are no more than trustees, they are the guardians of the rights of the People, not proprietors. If they step beyond the bounds of their commission, will their acts bind? Certainly not! The Parliament has a right to enact laws which are expedient,

dient for the state, and they must be obeyed by it, but that a Legislature can pass a law directly militating against its existence and welfare, I believe can scarcely be maintained.

Such a law would that be, which declared Ireland incorporated with England!

For when man loses his independence his existence becomes precarious, his property is no longer at his own disposal: the spur to active industry is taken away, and the human being degenerates into a slave!

Whoever opposes this argument, involves himself in this dilemma; either the Parliament can enact any laws they please, or there are some propositions which they cannot pass into laws, as relating to things beyond their power.

In the first case the Parliament, may publish a decree destructive or injurious to the State.

For example, they may vote that all agriculture should cease in the kingdom, and that

D

pasture

pasture should be alone attended to.—They may vote that all the shipping of Ireland be collected at Waterford, and burnt there.—They may vote that no more turf should be cut or made by the peasantry.—They may vote that fifty thousand Irishmen should be sent to Egypt to form a counter establishment against the French, and thereby promote the grand scheme of the *deliverance* of Europe.

I would ask *any one*, if *such* laws bind? Famine and misery of every kind and extent being their natural and unavoidable consequences.

No! The end of a well regulated society being to obtain security for their property and liberty, if a Parliament should invade either, the security is violated, and the society declares the act void.

Would not the taking away a Parliament, the means of preserving to the Society a constant security of their rights, be the greatest violation of that security which could be practised—and would it not actually amount to dissolving the Society, since the end for which they had united was destroyed?

If

If however it is granted to me, that there are some measures which the Parliament cannot pass into laws, as being hostile to the good of the Nation. I assert that a Union is one of them, which would subvert the fundamental conditions of Society, and would place the people of this island in a state of subjection to another nation.

The voting a Union would therefore be an illegal act in Parliament, and null in itself: and the trustees having violated the trust, reposed in them by their several Constituents, *the right of electing other trustees* would revert to the people.

The several bodies of Electors throughout the kingdom, assembled in legal meetings, would then proceed to a general re-election, and things would fall again into their usual and lawful course. The independence of Ireland would be preserved, and our benevolent Sovereign would behold with approbation, a portion of his subjects repelling the tyrannical attempt of their own Representatives. Nor let it be said, I am proposing a dangerous innovation.

I am

I am only recurring to the original principles of the British Constitution. I am writing in defence of the charters, the common law and the liberty of the Empire!

I shall not be deterred, through an apprehension of the common accusation—of wishing to substitute anarchy and confusion in the place of good order and tranquillity.

I have been accustomed to consider those expressions as merely *allegorical*, in the mouths of some Gentlemen, the former signifying “out of place,” and the latter “in place;” and the accompanying declamation, as indicative of the good or ill humour attending those situations.

A nation can never will its own destruction. Self-preservation is too strong a principle of human nature to be sported with.

Such a paradox therefore, as a Parliament voting that a Nation shall never elect another Parliament, can only be maintained on the ground of some usurped and foreign power acting in opposition to the good of the People.

Were

Were we a separate unconnected kingdom, it would be the interest of our Representatives to preserve themselves: as we are not, *lucrative bargains* may make it their interest to destroy themselves.

Does not this manifest the necessity of *reform* in Parliament, not the *extinction* of it?

If all our senators were independent and freely chosen by the nation, I believe Ireland would never have much cause to be apprehensive of a Union being proposed in her senate!

But as if to aggravate the cruelty and wickedness of this meditated blow, it comes from the hand of one of the most illustrious champions of reform, of the rights of the people, of the rights of Parliament, ever heard by an admiring British Senate.

The once favourite son of Liberty prepares to inflict the deadliest wound she ever received, gathering up her robe to meet the stroke with decency, and averting her head, she exclaims, with a look of anguish and reproach, "And you my son!" the immortal spirit of Chatham,
roused

roused from the silent shades of death, in awful accents cries "forbear!" and Erin, trembling Erin, stretches forth her supplicating hands for mercy!

I have often thought that the characters of Philip II. of Spain and of the minister, bore a strong resemblance. Both of them haughty and unsatisfactory to others, revolving vast and dark projects in their minds. An extensive empire under the command of each, the former entertained the idea of the *conquest*, the latter is intent on the *deliverance* of Europe. The one oppressed the Protestants, the other oppresses the Catholics;—to fight against liberty, not religion or error, being the aim of both.

The measures of the one kindled a flame in the Netherlands, which all his cruelty and rigour could not extinguish. The severity of the other raised a rebellion in Ireland, now happily suppressed. Philip introduced the torture of the Inquisition into the Netherlands, the minister has revived them in.....

To

To conclude the parallel, I shall give the words of the historian describing Philip, which may be applied, as the reader pleases.

“ 'Tis manifest that Philip II. was much to be blamed, as being partly himself the cause of these civil troubles, for he being born in Spain, and educated after the Spanish fashion, favoured only the Spaniards, acting in every step of his conduct the part of a supercilious haughty Spaniard, *which mightily alienated the minds of the Netherlanders.*” *

Could we suppose the minister's attention could be diverted one moment from contemplating his grand scheme, as yet an uncertain embryo in the womb of futurity; or from viewing it with a telescopic eye, as a decree of heaven, written in the clouds, we might venture to pronounce, that a production, entitled “ Arguments for and against a Union,” had been executed under his inspection.

But when we consider his ardour as a political lover, whether his mistress be the bank of England, or the deliverance of Europe, we cannot

* Puffendorf's History of Europe.

cannot suppose he will be drawn off from the pursuit in the least, until enjoyment crowns his wishes ; perhaps then, this *insidious* production may come from the hands of some hopeful pupil, who endeavours to promote his master's designs.

Whatever pen in England it may have issued from, it is plain that the author is an Englishman ; he writes, thinks, and argues as one, and had he put "London" to the title page, would have acted fairly and openly.

Will not an Englishman naturally prefer the interests of his own country ? this work speaks for him.

However, as he seems to propose a digested plan in a very artful manner, in order to smoothen the ruggedness of the way to the Irish Parliament, it may not be inexpedient to examine some of the arguments or assertions adduced by him.

The author begins, a little unfortunately, with two historical examples : the one relating to a separation, the other to an incorporation by force. I suppose he does not mean to propose either as an example.

Holland

Holland revolted through the tyranny of Philip II. of Spain.

The Sabines submitted to a Union with the Romans, through fear of their superior power.

Had our author turned his eye towards the Baltic, he would have found on its shores a complete historical example *against* an incorporating Union between two independent nations.

Sweden, Denmark and Norway, it is well known, were united by the famous Union of Calmar.

This, in the end, proved only productive of continual struggles between Denmark and Sweden. The Danes having the chief seat of government with themselves, always endeavoured to tyrannise over Sweden, and reduce it to the situation of a dependent province. The Swedes, at length tired out with repeated cruelties and oppression, threw off the Danish yoke for ever, under the conduct of the heroic Gustavus Vasa!

E

There

There we see the experiment of an incorporating Union *tried*, between two independent nations.

During the trial, the inferior kingdom was constantly oppressed by the superior; and their Union proved neither tranquil or *durable*.

The whole argument of this ministerial essay goes on the supposition, that a Legislature may be destroyed, if expedient.

It is thus stated, "two independent states finding their *separate existence* mutually *inconvenient*, propose a form themselves into *one state*, for their mutual benefit."

The translation of which is—the minister being provoked, that Ireland should not contribute a twentieth part of her income to promote his ambitious plans, that she dares to cherish principles of liberty, once cherished by himself, and perhaps not yet forgetting her conduct during the question of the Regency, is resolved to make her a subordinate province of England.

I trust

I trust I have proved, that neither the English or Irish Parliament can take away the people's right of having a Legislature; therefore all this gentleman's consequent reasoning appears perfectly groundless.

Though he strongly presses on us the example of France, in violent incorporating acts, yet Ireland will perceive that tyranny in the French, and tyranny in the English are the same, and will abhor it equally in both nations, whenever they are guilty of it.

The mortifying picture of Ireland, portrays in the strongest colours the inveterate prejudice of a narrow-minded Englishman; but I will tell him that this country, though not so rich as his own, is fertile in the virtues of the heart: that genuine hospitality, intrepid courage, warmth of soul and active benevolence, shine forth in Ireland as brightly as among any other people!

If our "civilization, agriculture, commerce, manufactures," are not equal to those of England, her ungenerous and jealous conduct towards us has been the cause. We are
further

further told, " that the Union will communicate by degrees all the advantages and excellencies" of the *superior* to the inferior state. Yes, no doubt it will communicate a share of a national debt, under which England is now tottering. It will communicate all the blessings of a requisition.

It will communicate taxation, without our own consent.

It will communicate an honourable participation, in attacking some wind-mills, with which the English Don Quixote is bent upon breaking a lance ; but one thing it will not communicate, and that is—English insensibility in bearing grievances!

We find, page 10th, that " the Sovereign must reside in one of the kingdoms, *there* would be of course, the metropolis of the empire, *there* would be the real seat of the Government." Surely in support of this position, it ought to be insisted, that as we have no right to have a capital town, Dublin ought to be shipped on board some men of war, and *incorporated* with the grand metropolis.

But

But I must correct the Gentleman's mistake, when he speaks of the Sovereign; he forgets there is such a thing as the Sovereignty of the People; and that a flourishing metropolis, is a jewel that is necessary to grace the imperial diadem of an independent kingdom.— The most insulting part of this studied composition, is that in which it is advanced, that Ireland receives protection from England, *at present, as a favour.*

We contribute largely towards manning her navy, recruiting her army, increasing her revenue; and we give her a great addition of respectability and weight in the world: Yet the protection due to us, is merely a *favour*, granted by the charity and benevolence of a great nation! Oh, what son of this injured land but will feel the blood mantle in his cheek, at such polluted pages, such ignominious doctrine!

Lastly, and craftily, this friend to philosophical discussion insinuates his plan of a Union.

First, he frightens and irritates the Protestant, and then tells him, his religion and power
can

can only be secured by an incorporation with England.

Secondly, he attempts to bribe the Catholic to acquiesce in the slavery of the Nation, offering them rights that will no longer exist, and privileges of no avail.

Thus the aim is plainly perceptible,—to divide the people—to inflame their jealousies—and then to enslave the whole!

Let the country recollect the fable of the Rods, singly you may break them all, bound together it is impossible.

In the phraseology of our author, this plan tends only to “an *extension* of our rights and liberties:” truly, I imagine it will resemble the extension of the parts of water by the action of fire; our rights will be extended, but they will be *evaporated* also.

A complete investigation of this work is unnecessary, it will be sufficient to shew the malignant spirit and tendency of it.

It

It is asserted, page 48, " that the Volunteers took advantage of the State."

Here the smothered resentment and regret of the English Cabinet break out. That Ireland should ever have attained to any degree of acknowledged independence, seems to have inflicted a pang not yet forgotten.

Previous to that memorable æra, when the Volunteers rose in arms to protect their country, the Irish people, though gifted by nature with every requisite to make them a great and flourishing Kingdom—a fertile Island, abounding in Rivers, Harbours and Mines, an invigorating though variable climate, a Peasantry hardy, spirited, and ingenious, were notwithstanding, by their own divisions, a weak and distracted Nation. The glorious efforts of the Volunteers, which *restored* to their country a considerable share of their Natural Rights, threw a brilliant though transient gleam of glory on the sad register of Irish degradations and misfortunes!

Irishmen may look to that period with proud recollection, when the Nation and the
Legislature

Legislature, acting in harmonious union, burst with a magnanimous effort the iron manacles with which they had long been bound.

This is the epoch, these are the exertions the author of "Arguments for and against a Union" wishes to vilify and misrepresent!

But, I trust, the Irish Nation will treat with merited scorn and contempt such productions and such ideas—they will consider all commercial advantages, held out to lure them to slavery, as the blaze of the assassin's torch, who holds it up to dazzle, that he may afterwards stab more securely.

The Catholics will view the insulting and hollow proffer of empty privileges, or paltry bribes, as a mockery and imposture; they will spurn at specious concessions accompanied by slavery.

The Protestants will not surrender their Liberty, to partake of a mutual subjection with the Catholics.

Religious

Religious prejudice and animosity will fade away, when the general welfare and existence will be the objects of pursuit.

The voice of the Nation will re-echo from the Capital to the shores where the Atlantic foams—from the hills and mountains of the North, to the uttermost extremities of the South! Liberty, awakened at the tremendous call, will inspire every heart with a determination to preserve their rights!

England will hear the sound with respect and dread. The Minister will sheathe the half drawn sword. He will remember the extremities to which Philip II. drove the Netherlanders.

If, however, the Parliaments of England and Ireland will persist in carrying through the measure of a Union, in opposition to the will of the Irish Nation, an *appeal to Heaven* may then be the only resource of an *injured People!*

Heaven will hear with compassion their agonizing groans, and alleviating their misery, will finally guide them to the haven of happiness and of peace.

The

The only argument which can be used against us, in support of a measure which I hope I have proved (even supposing that it will be attempted to pass it) invalid in itself, will be that of force; but indubitably the English nation cannot advance, or the Irish nation will not be convinced by so weak, or so insulting an argument, as that of the rights of violence.

While we, in defence of our Charters and Liberty have to plead the laws of Nature and Equity, and the established law of the Land; while we build the rights of our nation on the same foundations as those of the English constitution, and while we can maintain, beyond refutation, that the projected Union would be an innovation, at once illegal, unjust, and absurd; we may stand firmly and boldly forward, relying on the strength and justice of our cause; and vindicate and support the independence of our country, with the approbation of all good and honest men.

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THE END.